

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS and THE  
SPIRIT OF MILITARISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

John Lovejoy Elliott.



U. S. Army  
U. S. Hist. - etc

## UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS AND THE SPIRIT OF MILITARISM IN THE UNITED STATES

By JOHN LOVEJOY ELLIOTT

There is a work of grave importance progressing rapidly and quietly among us of which few people outside military and educational circles seem to be aware. That work is the formation of students' military instruction camps. These camps were originally proposed in a circular letter from Major General Leonard Wood to the college presidents in 1913. Their purpose is to give to students in our universities and in the graduating classes of our high schools a military training during the summer months. Arrangements have been completed to open during the coming summer four such camps, which have been located conveniently near great educational centers in the East, the South and the Middle and the Far West: at Plattsburgh, N. Y., Chickamauga Park, Ga., Lurington, Mich., and the Presidio of San Francisco, Cal.

Such a movement might well be regarded with the utmost concern if it were simply under the auspices of the Secretary of War and the officers in the regular army; but in addition it is commended to the attention of college authorities and students by the presidents of some of the leading universities, who have formed an

advisory committee. This committee is composed of the presidents of Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Lehigh, the College of the City of New York, the University of Michigan, the University of Alabama, the Virginia Military Institute and the University of California. The heads of many other schools and colleges have given the plan their hearty endorsement, and the President of the United States has lent to it the prestige of the great authority of his office and personality. The present excitement in regard to military affairs may be expected enormously to increase the numbers who will attend these camps.

A great deal is said, not only in the prospectus issued from Washington, but also by the college presidents, about the advantages of health, the needed discipline, good food, and pleasant recreation that will be furnished by this undertaking; but nothing can hide the fact that these military camps are intended to familiarize large numbers of students with the duties and work of soldiers. The United States army furnishes the equipment, sends its best officers as commanders and teachers, and outlines the curriculum. Some of the things included in the course are: theoretical study of tactics (carried on practically by the students in the field, in conjunction with the regular army troops and with blank ammunition to make the exercise more realistic); the proper handling and use of the rifle and other arms in different branches of the service;

the use of explosives; the tactical organization of the military forces of the United States; the psychology of war; the military history of our country; military policy, past and present; and the present scheme of organization of the land forces of the United States.

The immediate outlook for the success of this enterprise is very bright, but there may be a great difference between the immediate outlook and the eventual outcome of any undertaking. The question here raised is not of the benefit to the health or the contribution to the recreation of those who join these students' military camps, nor even of the advantage to the nation of having a reserve corps in the event of a defensive or offensive war. The question here put is: What will be the effect of this student training on the spirit of militarism in the United States? It is during the years of high school and college study that a young man's ideals become fixed. It is during these years that he chooses his occupation and gets the point of view that will be with him through life. Teachers in universities and high schools affect not so much the present as the future of the nation. It seems to many that this is a time when the ethics of war ought to be brought home to the youth of this nation with all the force and power that teachers and preachers and parents can wield. It is not a time alone for discussing means of immediate defense.

The United States is in a difficult position now and

the situation may, at any time, become dangerous. Such prudential methods as are necessary will have to be taken, although for these the strictest limits should be set. But this is a very different thing from the plan urged upon the students by the college presidents of attendance upon military camps, whose avowed object is to keep before their minds the conditions and duties imposed by war. The universities and the government have provided no counter training, to develop the kind of life among the students which will make for a permanent peace. There are, of course, peace societies in all the universities, but their influence will be weak indeed when compared to the influence of the university itself, when backed by the authority and prestige of the nation's high officers.

If the influence of the United States is to be for peace, then all the influence which the educational institutions have should be exerted in that direction. The danger which the military training inevitably brings with it is that when the nation is equipped and trained for war, it may also conceive itself to be dedicated to war.

The peculiar position of the United States in the world to-day has a significance, not only, we hope, for the present, but for all time. That we are not at war to-day is an accident, but that it should be the destiny of America to "do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all

nations," is the hope of the great majority of our citizens. These words of President Lincoln indicate a national destiny far higher and better than that which can ever be reached by any military power or through any military means. To bring this hope and this ideal home to the students would seem to be the supreme duty of those who have in charge the management of our educational institutions. To this end there can be but one way, and that is so to present the facts of war and its causes, particularly the present war, to the minds of students *that they will learn to hate war.*

Have the presidents of the universities enumerated above put themselves in a position to do this? The situation is different to-day from that of a year ago. Then the cry was that preparedness for war was the best thing to prevent war. Whole volumes were written (supported by lengthy economic arguments) to prove that war could never occur again. We were told, and many believed, that the tax for a strong army and navy was only an insurance against war. To-day these arguments still appear, but they are like pieces of torn and burnt paper blown through the air after a fire. We have been told that we must be prepared to defend ourselves, and yet we have seen all the nations of Europe going to war, each one protesting that it is only defending itself. And now in America we have the war alarm, and proposals without limit are being made to prepare America to take part in some future conflict.

And in line with this movement we seem to find many of the great educators. It is, indeed, time to ask what the universities are doing to prepare for peace.

If the universities and high schools sent out their students with the kind of ideals that would make them combat the causes of war, they would render a far higher service than by helping to train soldiers. It is in the minds of many that the universities often do fail just at this point, and that too often the best trained graduates take their places among the predatory groups of the community, with their intelligence sharpened, and their abilities heightened to take part in a merciless individualistic competition. The connection between universities and culture is very clear, but we have seen that high standards of culture are no barrier against either national or individualistic conflict. Indeed, there are many who believe that much of the teaching of history and of literature tends rather to glorify war. Baroness von Suttner, in "Lay Down Your Arms," presses home this point. The young soldier, meeting his friend in the battle, calls out that he feels that he is living for the first time an epic life, of the sort about which he had always been reading and hearing. It is the "heroic poems and heroic histories," the author says, "by whose means our schools bring up the young men to be fighters, that set vibrating in the minds of the young the sound of cannon, the flash of weapons and the shouts of combat."

And now we shall have in addition the psychology of war, for this is one of the subjects in the new curriculum taught under the shadow of the university. A far better use of psychology, although it seems to have received little enough attention, was proposed by Prof. James in his "Moral Equivalent of War," in which he describes the need of stirring the imagination of young men with the thought of patriotic service. He says that men are now proud of belonging to a conquering nation, and that they lay down their lives and their wealth if, by so doing, they may fend off subjugation. But who can be sure that the other aspects of one's country may not, with time and education and suggestion enough, come to be regarded with the same effective feelings of pride? Why should not men flush with indignation if the community that owns them is vile in any way whatsoever? Individuals, daily more numerous, now feel this civic passion. It is only a question of blowing on the spark until the whole population becomes incandescent, and among the ruins of old moral and military honor a stable system of morals and civic honor builds itself up. What the whole community comes to believe in grasps the individual as in a vise. The war function has grasped us so far, but other collective interests may some day seem no less imperative.

Although the plan proposed by Prof. James of having each university student, lawyer, engineer, doctor,

give one year of his life to the service of the nation may seem quixotic, he does point out a kind of service towards which the university should be directing and helping its students, not for one year, but through all the years of their work. The training which is given to the doctor, the lawyer, the merchant in the higher schools in this country often fails of its highest service because it does not help the man to see the social significance of his calling; because it does not dedicate him to the public service in anything like the same degree to which the soldier is dedicated. The experience which the young soldier has as he marches under the flag is tremendous. For the time being he is one with his nation; he is ready to make all sacrifices. He has the supreme experience of living his ideal.

Never until some agency, either the university, the government, or what you will, is able to connect the work and experience of the young man who goes into the peaceful pursuits with some such national or social aim can we hope to eliminate those elements of our daily life which inevitably lead to conflict. No institution is so well placed as the university to do this. Why should the army be the only department of the government to connect itself with the student body? It is true that through the post graduate departments of many universities, particularly Columbia, a great many young men and women pass into government service, but this does not affect the whole of the student body.

It relates chiefly to a few trained specialists. Could not the university do more to bring home to the great body of students the social and the ideal possibilities of their profession, by indicating what are the needs of the community into which the students go, and so fulfil its chief service to the nation by furthering with all its manifold advantages and agencies the socialization of medicine, law and business?

Fear is a great motive to call forth patriotic action, but it is not, as the advocates of militarism would have us believe, the only motive. Generous men and women can be stirred to sacrifice by other forms of injustice besides those which reflect on national honor. The thought that so many men by mere accident of birth should have to live a life of nothing but toil and hardship and obscurity can arouse generous action in reflective minds. If peace seems so unworthy to many, it is only unworthy because the way that so many people work and live in times of peace is unworthy. The youth who is capable of being stirred by patriotic motives to right the wrong done in times of war can also be stirred to right the wrong done in times of peace. The cultivation of this spirit seems to be the proper kind of patriotic work in the university.

## NON-MILITARY PREPARATION FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE

By TAIT MCKENZIE, M. D.

Professor of Physical Culture in the University of Pennsylvania

*Intrepidity, contempt of softness, surrender of private interests, obedience of command, must remain the rock upon which states are built.—WILLIAM JAMES.*

At a time when the problem of national defense calls forth so many vehement statements, the clear summary of the fundaments of a nation's defense quoted above, is more to be considered than many a set of figures or arguments. Perhaps for the very reason that he was a lover of peace, James was well aware of the fact that there is no nation that requires discipline more than does the American nation. There is a certain lack of doggedness, of doing a thing for the sake of accomplishing it, in the American of to-day. The constant—somewhat childish—"need" of change that we yield to, works effectively against such training as would result in discipline.

Were physical training of a thorough catholicity compulsory, our boys would develop to a full measure those qualities which are necessary for a nation's defense. Their mates would look out for it that they

acquired, if at first they lacked, a rugged physical courage, and a manly "contempt of softness." Every kind of work that is done by groups in the gymnasium, and every kind of game that is played outdoors by teams instils "surrender of private interest" and "obedience of command." Examples are legion: the skillful wrestler going through a drill in class with raw tyros and giving his best attention to helping them, the good batter on the team lowering his own average in order to score another player by a "sacrifice," the football player accepting a rebuke he did not deserve from a coach in silence, these and a score of similar occurrences may be observed at any university any day. But the universities are training only one American in every thousand. In the common schools very little physical training is given to the average boy; in fact, even those boys who have especial physical gifts are not (unless they attend one of the few private schools) given that all-around training of the body that results in muscular sense. As a nation we do not at all realize that the muscular sense needs training quite as much as any other part of the mind.

But if, in the long run, physical training is not made the means to discipline, then universal compulsory military service is the obvious substitute. In training soldiers, just as in physical training, development of muscular sense is the prime essential. This development is, in any case, a slow growth. As be-

tween the two alternative means to that end, military service and physical training, the latter, being so much broader in the range of its drills, and containing so many more competitive stimuli, when skillfully directed, achieves the desired result—muscular sense—more completely and also more rapidly than military training. Thus a man who already has muscular sense can learn the handling of the bayonet as easily and rapidly as he would master a new gymnastic drill. It is true, indeed, that the unit of the army is four, while the unit of physical training is the individual. But the fundamental evolutions of marching are taught in the gymnasium. Battalion drill only supplements them. Another important feature of modern military training which the physical director has anticipated is that of teaching the men how to take care of their condition and of the hygiene of their surroundings.

There remain, then, two very important factors of the soldier's training: the taking of large bodies of troops from one place to another with ease and expedition, and shooting. The first is entirely the province of the higher officers, and can only be learned in technical schools. The second—shooting, which includes the care of the weapon and equipment—is a difficult art and one which cannot be picked up in a short time. However, the teaching of it is one of the activities of the Public Schools Athletic Leagues today, and a large number of young marksmen have

qualified under its rigid standards. If shooting can be taught in this way to a large percentage of growing citizens, the common wearing of the uniform may be discarded and the false glamor of war dispelled.

# PRESIDENT WILSON'S APPEAL FOR IMPARTIALITY AND RESTRAINT IN DIS- CUSSING THE WAR

MY FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: I suppose that every thoughtful man in America has asked himself during the last troubled weeks what influence the European war may exert upon the United States, and I take the liberty of addressing a few words to you in order to point out that it is entirely within our own choice what its effects upon us will be and to urge very earnestly upon you the sort of speech and conduct which will best safeguard the nation against distress and disaster.

The effect of the war upon the United States will depend upon what American citizens say or do. Every man who really loves America will act and speak in the true spirit of neutrality, which is the spirit of impartiality and fairness and friendliness to all concerned. The spirit of the nation in this critical matter will be determined largely by what individuals and society and those gathered in public meetings do and say, upon what newspapers and magazines contain, upon what our ministers utter in their pulpits and men proclaim as their opinions on the streets.

The people of the United States are drawn from many nations, and chiefly from the nations now at war. It is natural and inevitable that there should be the utmost variety of sympathy and desire among them with regard to the issues and circumstances of the conflict. Some will wish one nation, others another, to succeed in the momentous struggle. It will be easy to excite passion and difficult to allay it. Those responsible for exciting it will assume a heavy responsibility; responsibility for no less a thing than that the people of the United States, whose love of their country and whose loyalty to its Government should unite them as Americans all, bound in honor and affection to think first of her and her interests, may be divided in camps of hostile opinions, hot against each other, involved in the war itself in impulse and opinion, if not in action. Such diversions among us would be fatal to our peace of mind and might seriously stand in the way of the proper performance of our duty as the one great nation at peace, the one people holding itself ready to play a part of impartial mediation and speak the counsels of peace and accommodation, not as a partisan, but as a friend.

I venture, therefore, my fellow-countrymen, to speak a solemn word of warning to you against that deepest, most subtle, most essential breach of neutrality which may spring out of partisanship, out of passionately taking sides. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that are to try men's souls. We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another.

My thought is of America. I am speaking, I feel sure, the earnest wish and purpose of every thoughtful American that this great country of ours, which is, of course, the first in our thoughts and in our hearts, should show herself in this time of peculiar trial a nation fit beyond others to exhibit the fine poise of undisturbed judgment, the dignity of self-control, the efficiency of dispassionate action, a nation that neither sits in judgment upon others nor is disturbed in her own counsels and which keeps herself fit and free to do what is honest and disinterested and truly serviceable for the peace of the world.

Shall we not resolve to put upon ourselves the restraint which will bring to our people the happiness and the great and lasting influence for peace we covet for them?

WOODROW WILSON.

WASHINGTON, D. C.  
August 18, 1914.

# PRESIDENT WILSON'S APPEAL FOR IMPARTIALITY AND RESTRAINT IN DISCUSSING THE WAR

**MY FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN:** I suppose that every thoughtful man in America has asked himself during the last troubled weeks what influence the European war may exert upon the United States, and I take the liberty of addressing a few words to you in order to point out that it is entirely within our own choice what its effects upon us will be and to urge very earnestly upon you the sort of speech and conduct which will best safeguard the nation against distress and disaster.

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## EXISTING ALLIANCES and a LEAGUE

### OF PEACE.

The world is  
tired of war.  
We must  
have peace  
now, in  
order to  
protect  
ourselves  
from  
persecution.

## EXISTING ALLIANCES and a LEAGUE OF PEACE.

John Bates Clark.